

Minutes of Meeting
Trail County Economic Development Commission
June 18, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.
Trail County EDC Conference Room & Zoom Video Conference Call

Present: Board members: Gary Nysveen, Kurt Elliott, Ben Hershey, Rick Halvorson, Sarah Lovas and Tom Eblen. Also present: Jim Murphy – Executive Director, Alyssa Short – Project Coordinator, Cole Short – Hillsboro Banner, Jim Johnson – Traill County Tribune, Mike Beltz – District 20 legislative candidate, Randy Lemm – District 20 legislator, Jared Hagert – District 20 legislative candidate and John Pederson – District 20 legislative candidate.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Vice Chair Nysveen.

Introductions – District 20 legislative candidates in attendance

Additions to Agenda

Marketing plan

Secretary’s Report

Halvorson moved to accept the May 21, 2020 meeting minutes, seconded by Hershey. Motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report

Hershey had a question about new customer balances, which were charges passed along for Facebook boosts to a few organizations helped by TCEDC. Lovas moved to accept the May 2020 treasurer’s report, seconded by Elliott. Motion carried.

Short said this month’s list of checks to approved included a combination of paper checks and scheduled Billpay payments. Lovas moved to approve payment of checks as submitted, seconded by Halvorson. Motion carried.

Executive Director’s Report

Murphy passed along info to the legislative candidates about the importance of continuing the Medicaid reimbursement program for rural hospitals. He ran through the results of a recent survey of Traill County businesses regarding shutdowns and restarts since March. He had a few meetings with Sanford Health regarding pandemic challenges and opportunities.

Murphy also has been in contact with Rob Jordahl in regard to multi-family housing in Hillsboro and said he hopes to see dirt turning next month. He spoke with City of Hillsboro reps and Lake Agassiz Development regarding another potential multi-family unit in Hillsboro and received updates on the progress of Dakota Natural Gas’ permit progress. He spoke with a Mayville rep regarding a business looking for assistance to construct a new building and talked with Cass County Housing about the 28 Traill County units they’re looking to sell.



He had discussions about a few potential new businesses in Clifford, as well as talks about a housing-dependent child care center that could open. The office also received follow-up requests from an RFP that was submitted earlier in the year.

Murphy conducted radio interviews with KRJB for their Community Day promotion, and also had meetings with AE2S and the Marketing Committee regarding a summer “Come Home to Trail” campaign and mini-grants for child care and beautification. Hershey and Halvorson agreed to be part of the grant review committee. Murphy said TCEDC provided some help and contacts for a local fire department seeking 501c3 status, assisted with PPE procurement for area businesses and talked to Mayville reps about possibly becoming a Main Street community.

Murphy said he and Short of completed a “boatload of work” for Traill-Steele Unified Command, and also dealt with ongoing state auditor questions. The board agreed that the audit frequency for TCEDC should follow that of the county (every two years). Murphy also hopes to have a new board member to fill David Johnson’s position by the July meeting.

Jordahl update

Jordahl’s engineer and the City of Hillsboro’s engineer continue to work out small details.

Riverwalk update

Dirt is moving for the interstate project right now but there might not be dirt turning for Riveralk yet this year. They’re working on grants and infrastructure plans.

P-card

The state purchasing card arrived in the day’s mail and Short will work to get everything set up.

Marketing plan

Murphy walked through the summer marketing plan recommended by the Marketing Committee, which includes three months of social media marketing targeted toward the metro areas of Minneapolis-St. Paul, Detroit and Chicago. This is a workforce recruitment campaign aimed at areas with higher unemployment due to COVID-19.

Trail County grant program

Grant materials were reviewed and discussed. Murphy and Short will post the materials online and announce the grants on Facebook, as well as sending them to the Trail County business list.

Virtual Lunch & Learn upcoming

Murphy and Short are working on ideas for a virtual Lunch & Learn. Lovas said having the virtual option could be a good idea even when in-person Lunch & Learns resume.

COVID-19 recovery and reopening survey

Murphy walked through the results during the Executive Director’s report; he’s considering a follow-up survey later in the year, as well.

Community updates

Halvorson – The bar in Galesburg might be opening, and the fertilizer plant has a good setup for this year. Apparently 30 percent of the county is in preventive plant; Murphy said that’s a lot of fertilizer not being used. Lovas says she thinks the percentage is closer to 40.

Lovas – Corn is maxed out from a crop insurance standpoint. The Hillsboro Stars & Stripes flag program looks awesome and has more than 300 flags reserved now.

Elliott – Very excited to have his first meeting in person with other people in a while. Lake Agassiz Development is looking to distribute money to communities; unfortunately, Trails County doesn’t have enough low-income communities. Between 2.5 and 4 inches of rain fell the previous evening; county and township roads are brutal. The primary election ran smoothly, with a record number of mail-in ballots. The courthouse is still open by appointment only. Work on the courthouse dome will be starting soon.

Eblen – Low-water crossings all are underwater.

Hershey – The City of Buxton rebid for the water and road projects. At a community meeting the council approved a water contractor, with the project being scaled back slightly with a gravity-fed system rather than pump driven. Tax assessments are the next step and there are outstanding questions regarding maintenance. The council also approved a road project for an overlay of new asphalt on city streets. Geneva’s, a retail shop, opened in the newly renovated blacksmith shop. A lot of homes are changing hands. The status of BIG community day is still unknown.

Nysveen – Modified Hillsboro Days celebration is scheduled this weekend. The horse pull and tractor pull are still on the schedule. The Hillsboro EDC day care sale is getting closer. A new fireworks stand business opened.

Murphy also noted that Mayville State recently was in the Herald regarding an article about increased consumer confidence in small, rural universities, and called attention to the Finley Motors grand opening and the construction of the new Strand Ready Mix building.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Nysveen reopened the meeting at 8:09 p.m.

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Hershey amended motion for the approval of checks, moving to approve payment of checks as submitted, with only one check signer due to social distancing measures, seconded by Lovas. Motion carried.

Meeting again adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Officer (printed name & office)	Signature	Date
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Recording Secretary (printed name)	Signature	Date
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